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of my ministers, my advisers, and my troops, then, through shame, he cannot disobey me. And he summoned his court, his ministers, and his troops, and he sent for the sheikhs and leading men of the country, and the palace was thronged with a great crowd, and he sent for his son, the Amir Kheyyun.

And the Sultan spoke and said: It is long since we have had celebrations and rejoicing as is fitting in a great city on the occasion of a royal marriage or the birth of an heir to the throne. I therefore command and order the Minister of Finance to produce a sum of one hundred thousand dirhems, and that each of the sheikhs of the tribes shall bring one thousand Syrian sheep, and each of the great merchants shall bring one thousand bags of the finest rice of Amara and of El Huweiza, and the Governor of Basra shall bring one thousand boatloads of the sweetest dates in Basra, and the Maadan shall bring milk, and the people of Mosul shall bring honey, and of Baquba, fruit, and from each town and village shall come the fruits and crops and vegetables of that village. And for every day of the first month of the new year one thousand sheep shall be killed and roasted and stuffed with walnuts and almonds, nor shall any man in the city go hungry, and the travellers and the people of the desert shall also be satisfied, for in that auspicious month will be celebrated the wedding of my son, the Amir Kheyyun, the beloved.

And the Amir Kheyyun stood up in front of his father, and he said: No. Then the faces of the great sheikhs and the great merchants and the captains of ships and the commanders of troops and the learned men became red with shame, for amongst the Arabs it is not fitting that a son speak in front of his father and into his father's face.

*539 LET it be known to you that once there was a prince in Kermanshah and he had such wealth as had never been known before in these lands. His escort was a thousand horsemen, and their horses were shod with gold, their horses were of the finest Arab stock, their clothing was of Chinese silk, the leather of their saddles was of the skin of lions, and gold and silver were the only metals used at that Court, save in the blades of their swords, which were of Damascus steel.

And in the course of years that prince took as wife the daughter of the Sultan of the Persians, and she was beautiful as a pearl from Kuweit, nor was there any flaw in her face or in her body, and it was necessary to keep her hidden from the eyes of men, lest after seeing her they became blinded to lesser things, for he who looks into the sun cannot see the glow of a cigarette.

So he took the girl to his palace, and they lived together in pleasure and in joy, and many months passed in the *539 making of love and its enjoyment. And it became apparent 527 that she was with child, and finally a son was born to the prince, and he rejoiced and ordered that there should be such a feast as had never been known before amongst the Persians. And he ordered to be slain a thousand sheep and a thousand geese and a thousand ducks and a thousand peacocks, and they were prepared with rice and limes and walnuts and truffles, and there was laid out a feast so tremendous that it took a man over an hour to ride from one end to the other on a fast horse. And they brought barrels and filled them with the wines of Mosul and the wines of Shiraz and the wines of the Russians and the Franks. And there came kings and princes and nobles and great sheikhs and the heads of tribes and captains of armies and great merchants and they gathered together to

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539 honour Rustam, the great prince of Kermanshah, and
527 they ate of the feast and the Prince Rustam also ate of the feast and drank of the wines until he was satisfied.

539 Now amongst the guests was the Sultan of the Persians,
576 the father of the girl, the wife of Rustam. So when all had laid aside their hands from eating, Rustam rose to give thanks to the Sultan and to the noble guests for their coming. And on the gathering fell a great silence when the prince rose up, that all might hear him with respect. So great was this silence that in the distance could be heard the buzzing of a bee and should a fly alight on the silken tablecloth, then the sound of its alighting was audible to all. Now, as the prince arose he noised a Noise. (May it be far from you.) Now let it not be hidden from you that the Persians have also some civilisation, and amongst them, as amongst us, though a man may sneeze or cough, and even a belch need not bury him in shame, there is a Noise which none may make without lasting disgrace, and it was this Noise which came from His Highness, the Prince Rustam, Ruler of Kermanshah.

And the Sultan and the great sheikhs and great nobles and merchants and captains heard and were astonished. And from the distance came the sound of a laugh of a slave, for truly slaves are without dignity and they do not know that conduct which is proper and seemly. And the face of the Prince Rustam became black with shame, and he turned from the assembly and went.

And the Prince Rustam returned from that multitude to his palace, nor did he look on the faces of his friends. He took from his treasury a bag of gold and ordered to be saddled his swiftest horse and he prepared for departure. Of all his servants and attendants there came to him only one, and this was a boy, a page, who loved him. And the